

Robert Rose and his wife, Gina, who live in Washington state, began The Rose International Fund for Children (TRIFC), to help empower children with disabilities in developing countries. I (Nasim) was able to speak to Rob over the phone about TRIFC and the different projects he is currently working on. Rob gave me so much insight about Nepal. Rob said “I have been deeply involved with Rotary and that involvement has translated into many projects/programs helping people with disabilities in Nepal. I was also a Rotary exchange student when I was 16 years old to Calcutta, India where I spent 8 months in 1974-75!”

Things I learned about Nepal:

- affluent families do “too much” for their children with disabilities so much so that the children do not learn to live independently

- the children who do have the opportunity to obtain an education are limited in their basic needs; for example, Rob said that these children usually live in hostels and dormitories and unlike other children, they don’t commute home every day therefore the school provides them with food, and other basic needs...and the schools don’t necessarily do a good job at doing this. The school provides disabled children with \$11/mo, which after purchasing Braille textbooks, school supplies, etc, does not leave much money to purchase food, clothes, feminine hygiene supplies, etc.

Rob is currently working on implementing the following projects in Nepal:

- He has contact with a Rotary Club in Nepal and they function as his liaison to a school in Nepal where Rob has previously funded projects. The Rotaracts will be implementing Rob’s project of “Daily Living Skills” – a program that teaches young, disabled peoples how to do daily tasks such as cooking, cleaning, laundry, and much more. Rob got the idea for the program from the Washington State School for the Blind, and tailored the program to be conducive to the culture and environment of Nepal. He is currently in the process of working with his grant-writer to propose a grant to the U.S. AID for funding this program. He says since this program doesn’t require building infrastructure or facilities (since those are already available), funding will be minimal (about \$25,000).

- Days for Girls is an organization that produces sanitary pads, and Rob’s organization is working to modify this product to cater to girls/women with disabilities. They already have some prototypes in the way which they will be implementing and getting feedback from the consumers (girls in Nepal) to see how successful it is and what changes need to be made.

- Rob suggested we also get in contact with the Cal Poly Rotary Club and even found the CP Rotary Club website for us! <http://www.calpoly.edu/~rotaract/>